Integrated Programme for Management of Food Economy

852. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of high foodgrain prices and stocks for public distribution system and a marked slowdown in agricultural investment, Government are considering for an integrated programme for management of the food economy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) The Government keep on reviewing the price and stock position of foodgrains from time to time and take appropriate step to ensure that the requirements of the Public Distribution System are met.

Production of Rice

853. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what were the targets for the production of rice for the year 1991-92 and what is the target for the year 1992-93; and

(b) what steps Government have taken to improve the production of rice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The Rice Production target for 1991-92 was 76.5 million tonnes and for 1992-93 it is 77.25 million tonnes.

(b) Special Thrust Programme "Integrated Programme for Rice Development is being implemented in major rice growing States/UTs in the country for increasing the production and productivity levels of rice. For the propagation of adoption of improved rice production technology through this scheme assistance is being provided to the farmers for use of inputs like certified seeds, micronutrients, herbicides, improved farm implements plant protection equipments etc.

Cereals

854. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the area under cultivations for coarse cereals has been continuously declining;

(b) if so, what are its impacts; and

(c) what steps Government have taken or propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Due to declining trend in the area of coarse cereals on account of diversion to more remunerative crops like oilseeds, sugarcane etc., the demand for coarse cereals is not met in full. For increasing the productivity and production of coarse cereals, a Central Sector Scheme on Special Foodgrain Production Programme-Maize and Millets (SEPP) is in implementation in 13 States, viz. A.P., Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, H.P., J & K, Karnataka, M. P. Maharashtra Orisa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and U.P. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided for various critical inputs like distribution of certified seeds, herbicides, plant protection chemicals, plant protection equipments, improved farm implements and conduction of field demonstrations, training to farmers etc.